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## FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM: Amembassy TEHRAN

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Desp. No. 1054

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

May 29, 1958

REF:

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 ARMX-4 NAVY

SUBJECT: Iraq-Iran Border Negotiations

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The Embassy has been informed by Najib SHABIBI, Third Secretary in the Iraqi Embassy, that arrangements are going forward for talks between Iran and Iraq on frontier questions affecting the two countries. According to Shabibi, the establishment of a joint commission of the two countries has been formally agreed upon. In addition to representatives of Iran and Iraq the commission will include a neutral Swedish arbitrator who will be empowered to resolve any differences arising during the commission's discussions. It is not clear, however, whether the arbitrator's rulings will be permanently binding or will require subsequent ratification by the two parties. According to Shabibi, the Iraqis have also agreed to the formation of a joint commission as provided for in the agreement of 1937 between Iran and Iraq to supervise the operations of the Port of Basra. Apparently this does not include an undertaking by the Iraqis to cede to Iran sovereignty over the Iranian side of the Shatt-al-Arab where it forms the boundary between the two countries.

The border commission will be charged with reviewing the entire border situation, including that of the Shatt-al-Arab, making adjustments where necessary and demarcating the frontier. Although the talks are expected to take place in Tehran, the commission will presumably have to spend some time on the frontier itself.

According to Shabibi, the Swedish arbitrator has been selected, although he could not recall his name, and has already been supplied with relevant documents by both governments. A date for the talks to begin has not, however, been decided on, and the two countries have not yet named their own commissioners. Shabibi stated the selection of commissioners for Iraq must be done by the Arab Federation Government, which has not yet deliberated on the question.

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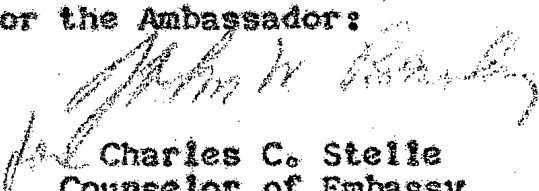
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from Tehran

Comment

If the border talks get under way soon and result in mutually satisfactory agreements, the result should be to call a halt to the scurrilous attacks on Iraq that have recently taken place in the Iranian press and Majlis. Closer cooperation between the two countries within the Baghdad Pact could also result.

For the Ambassador:

  
Charles C. Stelle  
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